

CITY OF JERSEY CITY

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Mayor Healy to Celebrate 9th Annual Jersey City LGBT Pride Festival: Change = Possibility

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy, the Municipal Council and the Division of Cultural Affairs will proudly celebrate the 9th Annual Lesbian & Gay Pride Festival from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 23, 2009 at Exchange Place.

The annual festival is sponsored by the **Jersey City Lesbian & Gay Outreach (JCLGO)**, whose organizers have worked to foster through the festival a better way to connect with the entire Jersey City community through talent, the involvement of gay and lesbian artists in the community and their relevance in helping Jersey City become a recognized and respected cultural center in which all the residents of the State's second largest municipality can take pride.

“Every year the festival brings a vibrant atmosphere which truly adds to Jersey City’s tapestry,” said Mayor Healy. “Organizations such as the JCLGO help produce social and political acceptance throughout our city, state, and country.”

Jersey City Lesbian & Gay Outreach, Inc. (JCLGO) arranges activities for everyone to gather together, celebrates what makes each individual unique, and encourages one to take pride in who they are.

Every year, the festivals of JCLGO create love and understanding between general society and the LGBT community which reduces the social gap and encourages acceptance of equal human rights. In preaching acceptance, we gain more knowledge and understanding to positively appreciate the LGBT community.

JCLGO sends a positive message filled with the endless possibilities that change can bring to our community while inspiring everyone to make a positive difference. This year’s theme “CHANGE = POSSIBILITY” serves as a beacon of hope that everyone may overcome any obstacle and achieve unity and peace. It also celebrates the social and political acceptance that Jersey City continues to offer and promote. Jersey City residents, businesses and government now work together in focusing on the things that matter such as the economic growth in the city, promoting safety and preventing crime.

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Music and entertainment, along with messages of encouragement and support, will be featured throughout the daylong festival. Arts & crafts, handmade artifacts, jewelry, sculptures, children's rides and activities, face painting, exotic foods and delectable desserts as well as a variety of refreshments will also be available.

This year, the festival features artists and performances by DJ Fred Prince; Indie musician and world renowned artist Houston Bernard; the high energy female group Ten Year Vamp; Xavier Paul; Kelly King; Lala; Billboard recording artist Fredrick Ford; and international vocalist, Janid.

Founded by Napoleon Paul Mendoza and Miguel Cardenas, the Jersey City Lesbian and Gay Outreach began on May of 2001, and later grew into an all-volunteer group in three short months. On August 25, 2001, they hosted Jersey City's 1st LGBT Pride Festival with the theme "Strength Through Visibility," with an attendance of more than 1,000 festival-goers.

Jersey City Lesbian and Gay Outreach created a venue for its members who felt that their voices were not being heard in the community. They have stood tall and instilled pride in so many who would otherwise be in fear of public scrutiny or harassment. The Jersey City Lesbian and Gay Outreach has been a beacon to those in need of support.

Jersey City Lesbian and Gay Outreach reached a milestone in 2004 in Hudson County when they raised the rainbow flag, a symbol of LGBT Pride, for the first time ever at the Hudson County Courthouse and at City Hall in Jersey City, a tradition that continues on; and

For more information about the LGBT Pride Festival, call the Division of Cultural Affairs at (201) 547-6921.

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.///